



Department of Justice

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UNITED STATES ATTORNEY'S VIOLENT CRIME INITIATIVE YIELDS RESULTS

THIRTEEN INDICTED IN TERRE HAUTE FEDERAL DRUG TRAFFICKING CASE

PRESS RELEASE

INDIANAPOLIS - Joseph H. Hogsett, United States Attorney, announced that a grand jury indicted 13 individuals for trafficking large amounts of methamphetamine in the Terre Haute community. The indictment was unsealed today in U.S. District Court in Terre Haute.

The indictment charges 13 individuals with conspiring to distribute and possess with intent to distribute methamphetamine. The individuals charged in this indictment are as follows:

- JESSE JAMES LINARES, 32, currently of Mishawaka, Ind.
- JESUS L. RAMOS (a.k.a. "Zeus"), 38, currently of Crown Point, Ind.
- GREGORY R. MILLER, 29, of Terre Haute
- BRIAN DENNY, 30, of Terre Haute
- CHAD NOBLE, 33, of Terre Haute
- CURTIS BILYOU, 33, of Terre Haute
- EDWARD WEATHERSPOON (a.k.a. "Knucklehead"), 36, of Terre Haute
- CONSTANTINO CEJAS, 46, of Indianapolis
- NICHOLAS CEJA, 39, of Indianapolis
- STEVEN GULLEY, 51, of Terre Haute
- SAMUEL MORAN, 26, of Brazil, Ind.
- ELISHA M. CHARLES, 32, of Terre Haute
- MICHAEL BENNETT, 33, of Terre Haute

The indictment alleges that the defendants used multiple sources of supply to bring pound quantities of "crystal" methamphetamine to Terre Haute. After the methamphetamine arrived in Terre Haute, the conspirators then distributed the drug throughout the Terre Haute community.

The indictment alleges that several of the conspirators possessed firearms in connection with their drug trafficking activities.

Approximately 150 law enforcement officers participated in the execution of arrest and search warrants related to this investigation. These warrants were executed on residences and individuals in Terre Haute, Indianapolis, Crown Point, and Mishawaka. The FBI - Terre Haute Safe Streets Task Force led the seven month investigation.

In 2010, information was obtained that a group of individuals were distributing large amounts of "crystal" methamphetamine in Terre Haute. The task force then launched "Operation Octane" to target and dismantle the drug trafficking organization. The lengthy investigation included the confiscation of over \$100,000 worth of methamphetamine. All told, law enforcement seized and purchased more than two pounds of "crystal" methamphetamine, seized approximately \$27,000 in cash, and confiscated 33 firearms, including hand guns and assault rifles. Police officers also seized two pipe bomb explosive devices. Today's indictments and arrests are the culmination of that investigation.

Michael Welch, Special Agent in Charge, Federal Bureau of Investigation, stated, "Criminal enterprises which distribute drugs and weapons pose a danger to the community. The FBI Wabash Valley Safe Streets Task Force and other law enforcement agencies cooperated in this investigation to make the community a safer place to live."

Assisting the FBI in the investigation were the Bureau of Alcohol Tobacco Firearms and Explosives, the Vigo County Sheriff's Department, the Terre Haute Police Department, the Indiana State Police, Clay County Sheriff's Department, and the Seelyville Police Department.

According to Assistant United States Attorney Matthias D. Onderak, who is prosecuting the case for the government, all thirteen defendants, if convicted, face prison sentences of at least 10 years up to potentially life imprisonment without parole.

Initial hearings are scheduled for Friday morning before a U.S. Magistrate Judge in Terre Haute for 10 of the defendants. Linares and Ramon will appear in federal court for the northern district of Indiana today. Defendant Chad Noble is currently a fugitive from justice.

The indictments are an allegation only, and all defendants are presumed innocent unless and until proven guilty at trial or by guilty plea.

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